

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information processing apparatus comprising:

means for disabling an output of sound  
5 information;

means for detecting a state of the sound information; and

means for notifying a user of the state of the sound information detected with the means for detecting  
10 the state by using information other than a sound.

2. The information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the means for detecting the state detects the state of the sound information in a case where the means for disabling the output is active.

15 3. The information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the means for notifying the user notifies the user of the state of the sound information in a case where the means for disabling the output is active.

20 4. The information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the means for detecting the state detects the state of sound information targeted for analog sound information and digital sound information.

25 5. The information processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the means for detecting the state comprises:

a sound controller connected to a CPU via a bus,

controlling input and output of digital sound information via the bus and controlling input and output of analog sound information; and

5 means for sensing a state of the sound information which is inputted or outputted by the sound controller,

wherein the means for notifying the user notifies the user of the state of the sound information detected by the means for sensing the state.

6. The information processing apparatus according  
10 to claim 5, wherein the means for sensing the state further comprises:

means for sensing a sound output state of the sound information outputted from the sound controller;  
and

15 an input/output controller which controls the means for notifying the user based on the state of the sound information sensed by the means for sensing the state and the sound output state of the sound information sensed by the means for sensing the sound  
20 output state.

7. The information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the means for notifying the user notifies the user of the state of the sound information detected by the means for detecting the state by using  
25 means for emitting light.

8. The information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the means for notifying the user

notifies the user of the state of the sound information detected by the means for detecting the state by using vibrating means.

9. The information processing apparatus according  
5 to claim 1, wherein the means for notifying a user outputs the state of the sound information detected by the means for detecting the state to display the state of the sound information on a display screen.

10. The information processing apparatus according  
to claim 1, wherein the means for disabling the output includes at least one of a volume adjustment circuit and a sound mute circuit.

11. A method of notifying a state of an information processing apparatus which handles sound  
15 information, the method comprising:

detecting a state of sound information handled by the information processing; and

notifying the state of the detected sound information.

20 12. The state notifying method according to  
claim 11, wherein the information processing apparatus comprises:

means for outputting a sound in accordance with sound information; and

25 means for disabling a sound output of the sound outputting means,

wherein notifying the state of the sound

information notifies a state of sound information detected by detecting a state of the sound information when a sound output of the means for outputting the sound is disabled by the means for disabling the sound  
5 output.

13. The state notifying method according to claim 11, wherein the information processing apparatus comprises:

means for outputting a sound in accordance with  
10 sound information; and

means for disabling a sound output of the sound outputting means,

wherein notifying the state of the sound information notifies a state of the sound information detected by detecting a state of the sound information regardless of an operation state of the means for  
15 disabling the sound output.